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COMMUNICATIONS

THE TRAILS FROM LAKE PEPIN TO THE CHIPPEWA

In the March number of our magazine it was suggested that I might furnish data as to the old trails from Lake Pepin to Menomonie and possibly "to the Chippewa." I can.

The earliest landing place for traders, lumbermen, and tourists to the Chippewa River region was at Nelson's Landing, Wisconsin, a little way below the mouth of the Chippewa River (into the Mississippi). A little later Read's Landing was founded and became the great port of entry for all this section. A few in very early times landed at Pepin.

From Nelson's the trail led direct to the Chippewa where a crossing was made in canoes or by wading in seasons of low water.

Then following fairly closely the river bank passing Three Mile Prairie, Five and Seven Mile Bluffs, and Plum Creek at its mouth, crossing there, and still following the river the trail passed what was later called Marks's, and up to Dead Lake where Fletcher kept a Stopping Place, as did Mr. Stevens on Dead Lake Prairie. It then followed the west bank of Dead Lake past Round Hill on the west and on to the Eau Galle River which it crossed a mile or so below Carson & Eaton's mill at what is the present village of Eau Galle. Just before crossing the river a trail led direct to the mill, and some stopped there over night, but most men kept on past Waubeek Mound to Macauley's on sections 34-26-13 W. He kept a stopping place. Here the trail to Menomonie turned north between sections 33 & 34, 27 & 28 and then over to the line between sections 22 & 23 and 14 & 15, then swinging around Chimney Bluff across sections 11 & 3 (all these in Town 26, Range 13 west Dunn Co. Wis.) it passed through what is now the west side of Downsville and followed the Red Cedar (or Menomonie River as it was then called) closely all the way to Menomonie. At Macauley's a trail to Dunnville and on to Eau Claire, kept northeast going down onto the Chippewa bottoms and then to Dunnville—some preferred to keep on the Menomonie trail until they reached

the corner of sections 21, 22, 27, 28, T 26, R 13 where they turned east to Dunnville and joined the other trail, went up the hill and followed the high land to Eau Claire.

There was still another trail from Eau Galle to Menomonie by what was known as the Gap Route, but it was not much traveled, and I can only say that it went north from Eau Galle for some distance and then joined the other route at Irvine's, or Lower Mill, as it was then named.

The Indian trail from Menomonie northeast to Rice Lake, etc., is described as starting from the camp ground at what is now Evergreen Cemetery and Point Comfort, following the shore of Red Cedar River to Cedar Falls and then "toward the sunrise, and at a distance of about one rest and a smoke the trails branched off, one leading up the east bank of the Red Cedar to Chetek, Prairie Lake, Rice Lake, Pokegama, Cedar Lake, Big Chetek, to Lac Court de Oreilles"—the home of the Chippewa. The other trail from Cedar Falls led up the west side of Red Cedar River and then Hay River to about Prairie Farm, thence crossing Yellow River and coming out at The Elk Trail or Louseburg on Red Cedar River, and to Rice Lake, Bear Lake, Long Lake, Mud Lake (now Spooner), and to points on the Namekagon.

I am indebted for much information about the trails north of Menomonie to Mr. Thomas Bracklin of Reserve, who was born and has lived for about sixty years on these trails and their termini, though I have been over them many times in the last fifty-five years, as the present roads follow much the old trails.

HENRY E. KNAPP

Menomonie